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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XLV—No. 1 **November, 1956**

THE chief difficulty which prevents men of science from believing in divine as well as in nature Spirits is their materialism. The main impediment before the Spiritualist which hinders him from believing in the same, while preserving a blind belief in the "Spirits" of the Departed, is the general ignorance of all, except some Occultists, about the true essence and nature of matter. It is on the acceptance or rejection of the theory of the Unity of all in Nature, in its ultimate Essence, *that mainly rests the belief or unbelief in the existence around us of other conscious beings besides the Spirits of the Dead.* —H. P. BLAVATSKY

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Are you prepared to see that comfort may be a seduction?
—R. M. WEAVER

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XLV November, 1956 No. 1

THE OPEN VIEW

NO one who reads current articles, books, and even current poetry can remain unaware of the enormous change that has taken place among the thoughtful members of Western civilization since the founding of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875. While the process of change has doubtless proceeded with a certain constancy, its fruit has become particularly evident during the past ten years. For in this period, a remarkable freedom from preconception has become manifest. It is not that many writers may be heard proclaiming "the Truth," but that they seem to reflect a spirit or attitude of mind which is consistent with authentic philosophical expression.

Much of the thinking of the modern world is at least hospitable, from the viewpoint of logic, to the Theosophical explanation of things. This does not mean that the leaders of today's thought are on the verge of "accepting" Theosophy. This would be too much to expect—or, from another angle, too little. Theosophy is of little value, relatively speaking, to those who "accept" it in a believing sense. Ultimately, Theosophy is an attitude of mind, and it is least of all an "accepting" attitude of mind. What may be hoped for of the contemporary spirit in letters and philosophical inquiry is rather a growing capacity to recognize in Theosophical principles the tools of discovery. If these tools gain widespread use—called by whatever name—the result will be a vast and infinitely differentiated harvest of new insights and inspirations, but all with the single significant fruit of self-reliant and unprejudiced search for truth. And this, surely, is the consummation for which H. P. Blavatsky labored.

She sought, in other words, to begin a revolution of thought which would eventually lead to a transformation of culture. Culture does not grow from conformity to systems. A culture of living minds develops from roots which take their nourishment from attitudes of soul, and these attitudes demand an atmosphere of freedom. H.P.B. began, in short, a *leavening* process which found its most important collaborator in the history of the West during the past seventy-five or eighty years. The student of Theosophy may argue that it was the foresight of the founders of the Movement, their insight into the Karma of the West and the world, which caused them to launch the Movement at the time it was launched, and to provide the body of ideas which constituted the actual "teachings" given currency by H.P.B. It was seen, he may aver, that these teachings would meet the uprising tide of inquiry, bringing the kind of light on human problems that had the best chance of being recognized and adopted by the participants of the great change.

H.P.B. did not set out to "convert" the world. She set out to leaven the mind of the times. Those who share her purpose and her vision, however inadequately, may now conclude that she succeeded—conclude this not in pride or with a claim of "vindication" of their beliefs, but as a larger understanding of the change in which they, too, are endeavoring to participate. Nor is it necessary, as a part of this understanding, to find demonstrations of direct connection between the new spirit and the Theosophical teachings. After all, the prime message of Theosophy concerns the high potentialities of all human beings, so that an awakening to the powers of independent thinking, a shedding of prejudices and traditional limitations of mind are seen to be aspects of the Theosophical Movement, for which no "credit" need be claimed. Anything which is a vindication of the human spirit is a vindication of Theosophy, and Theosophy seeks for nothing more.

What, then, of the role of the Theosophical movement, proper, and of the line of transmission of the teachings as they were given out? Among students, it may be, the responsibility is to work at this transformation of attitudes with as much self-consciousness as possible. It is given to students to grasp what is going on, a part of a great historical process of psycho-moral or manasic evolution, and to add to it the peculiar illumination which self-consciousness makes possible. There will always be those to join in the self-conscious effort, who will represent not only the beneficiaries of the leavening process, but the

fellowship of companions who undertake to extend its effects.

One of the first perceptions which come to the student in contemplating the change in the general temper of the mind of the West during the past eighty years is the extraordinary scope of the accomplishment of H.P.B. There is nothing to compare it with, unless it be the great reform movement begun by Gautama Buddha. Yet not even Buddha was required to achieve a complete revolution. No more is needed than a comparison of Buddhist and Hindu scriptures—such as, for example, the *Dhammapada* with the *Upanishads,*—to show the inner identity of the two outlooks. Buddha's reform was ethical and psychological. He abandoned nothing of the religion of the Hindus, so far as philosophical teachings were concerned, although he changed the emphasis from metaphysics to psychology and ethics, and renounced the external divisions of caste.

All that H.P.B. had to work with, on the other hand, was the fragmentary symbolism of corrupted Western religion, and the impartial spirit of the scientific movement, and this had already been largely identified with the conclusions of materialism, so that anyone who attempted to practice a true impartiality of mind in transcendental philosophy was bound to be accused of being a crypto-dogmatist. The Movement she launched proclaimed first principles. In a world that was systematically throwing out all religious and metaphysical conceptions, she had to defend ideas which she maintained were the origin of all religious and metaphysical teachings. This was against the grain of the immediate historical tendency—the rising wave of materialistic rejection of *all* transcendental teachings.

We can see, also, that this would have been an entirely futile and hopeless undertaking, save for the fact that the Theosophic synthesis and explanation of things would find both intuitive and practical confirmation through independent thought, once the debris of the past had been swept away. False systems of belief and oppressive social systems must depend upon ceaseless indoctrination and the extensive organization of sentinels of "order." The Theosophical Movement, on the other hand, rests its faith upon the spirit of man. It needs no policemen or proselytizers. It spreads its ideas like living germs, to bring to life the processes of awakening and confidence in human powers that, once set in motion, produce in the end the brotherhood of the free.

CYCLES

IN advancing these few observations upon the doctrine of cycles, no claim to an exhaustive study of the matter is made. This paper is merely by way of suggestion.

The subject was brought before my mind by our discussion some evenings ago, when the question of the descent upon earth, or ascent from it, of celestial beings or progressed souls engaged our attention. It seemed certain that such ascent and descent were governed by cyclic laws, and therefore proceeded in regular periods. Some sentences from the *Wisdom of the Egyptians* by Synesius, in matter furnished me by Bro. Johnston, now of India, read:

> After Osiris, therefore, was initiated by his father into the royal mysteries, the gods informed him that a strong tribe of envious and malignant dæmons were present with Typhos as his patrons, to whom he was allied and by whom he was hurled forth into light, in order that they might employ him as an instrument of the evil which they inflict on mankind. For the calamities of nations are the banquets of the evil dæmons.
>
> Yet you must not think that the gods are without employment, or that their descent to this earth is perpetual. For *they descend according to orderly periods of time,* for the purpose of imparting a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind. But this happens when they harmonize a kingdom and send to this earth for that purpose souls who are allied to themselves. For this providence is divine and most ample, which frequently through one man pays attention to and affects countless multitudes of men.
>
> For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes, who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns. This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature. But when matter excites her own proper blossoms to war against the soul, the resistance made by these heroic tribes is small when the gods are absent; for everything is strong only in its appropriate place and time. But when the harmony adapted in the beginning by the gods to all terrene things becomes old, they descend again to earth that they may call the harmony forth, energize and resuscitate it when it is as it were expiring.

NOTE.—This article (a paper read by William Q. Judge before the Aryan Theosophical Society, October 22, 1889) was published in the *Path*, December, 1889, and last reprinted in THEOSOPHY 32: 196.

When, however, the whole order of mundane things, greatest and least, is corrupted, then it is necessary that the gods should descend for the purpose of imparting another orderly distribution of things.

And in the Bhagavad Gita it is said by Krishna:

When Righteousness
Declines, O Bharata! when Wickedness
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
Visible shape, and move *a man with men,*
Succoring the good and thrusting the evil back,
And setting Virtue on her seat again.

At the approach of Brahma's day, which ends after a thousand ages, all manifested objects come forth from the non-developed principle. At the approach of Brahma's night they are absorbed in the original principle. This collective mass of existing things, thus coming forth out of the absolute again and again, is dissolved at the approach of that night; and at the approach of a new day it emanates again spontaneously.

In the foregoing quotations two great aspects of cyclic law are stated.

The latter has reference to the great cycle which includes all cycles of every kind. All the minor cycles run their course within it. When it begins, a new creation is ushered in, and when it ends the great day of dissolution has arrived. In Arnold's translation of the Bhagavad Gita the beginning of this great cycle is beautifully called by him "*this vast Dawn,*" and of the close he reads:

When that deep night doth darken, all which is
Fades back again to Him who sent it forth.

The real figures expressing the mortal years included in this period are not given. Each Manwantara, according to the Hindus, is divided into the four Yugas or Ages, with a certain number of years alloted to each. Speaking on this subject in the *Key to Theosophy* (page 83), H. P. Blavatsky gives us a clue thus:

Take as a first comparison and a help towards a more correct conception, the solar year; and as a second, the two halves of that year, producing each a day and a night of six months' duration at the North Pole. Now imagine, if you can, instead of a Solar year of 365 days, eternity. Let the sun represent the universe, and the polar days and nights of six months each—days and nights lasting each 182 trillions and quadrillions of years, instead of 182 days each. As the sun arises every morning on our objective horizon out of its (to us) subjective and antipodal space, so does the universe emerge periodically on the plane of objectivity, issuing from that of subjectivity—the

antipodes of the former. This is the "Cycle of Life." And as the sun disappears from our horizon, so does the Universe disappear at regular periods when the "Universal Night" sets in.* *

This is about the best idea we can get of it. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive these periods. No brain can grasp 182 trillions of years, much less if quadrillions are added. Few if any persons can mentally traverse the full extent of even *a million.* But we can make an approximation to the idea by using her suggestion of dividing the year and calling six months a day and six months a night, and then extending each into what is equivalent to infinity with us, since it is impossible to seize such immense periods of time.

And carrying out the correspondence suggested by her, we have at once a figure of the inclusion of all the minor cycles, by calling each day when we rise and night when we sleep as the beginning and ending of minor cycles. Those days and nights go to make up our years and our life. We know each day and can calculate it, and fairly well throw the mind forward to see a year or perhaps a life.

A quotation from Vol. 1, at 31 of *Isis Unveiled* will give us the Indian figures. She says:

"The Maha Kalpa embraces an untold number of periods far back in the antediluvian ages. Their system comprises a Kalpa or grand period of 4,320,000,000 years which they divide into four lesser yugas running as follows:

Satya yug	1,728,000	years
Treta yug	1,296,000	"
Dwapara yug	864,000	"
Kali yug	432,000	"
	4,320,000	

which make one divine age or Maha yuga; seventy-one Maha Yugas make 306,720,000 years, to which is added a sandhi, or twilight, equal to a Satya yuga or 1,728,000 years, to make a manwantara of 308,-448,000 years. Fourteen manwantaras make 4,318,272,000 years, to which must be added a sandhihamsa or dawn, 1,728,000, making the Kalpa or grand period of 4, 320,000,000. As we are now (1878) only in the Kali Yuga of the 28th age of the 7th manwantara of 308,448,000 years, we have yet sufficient time before us to wait before we reach over half of the time allotted to the world."

Further H. P. Blavatsky clearly states that the other cycles are carried out within this greater one, as at 34, vol. 1.

> As our planet revolves once every year around the sun and at the same time once in every 24 hours upon its own axis, thus traversing minor cycles within a larger one, so is the work of the smaller cyclic periods accomplished and recommenced within the Great Saros.

Leaving the region of mathematics, we find this great period represents the extension of pigmy man into the vast proportions of the great man, whose death at the close of the allotted period means the resolving of all things back into the absolute. Each of the years of this Being embraces of our years so many that we cannot comprehend them. Each day of his years brings on a minor cataclysm among men; for at the close of each one of his days, metaphorically he sleeps. And we, as it were, imitating this Being, fall asleep at night or after our diurnal period of activity.

We are as minor cells in the great body of this Being, and must act obediently to the impulses and movements of the body in which we are enclosed and take part.

This greater man has a period of childhood, of youth, of manhood, of old age; and as the hour arrives for the close of each period, cataclysms take place over all the earth. And just as our own future is concealed from our view, so the duration of the secret cycle which shows the length of life of this Being is hidden from the sight of mortals.

We must not, however, fall into the error of supposing that there is but one of such great Beings. There are many, each being evolved at the beginning of a new creation. But here we touch upon a portion of the ancient philosophy which is fully explained only to those who are able to understand it by virtue of many initiations.

The Sandhya and Sandhyhamsa referred to in the quotation taken from *Isis Unveiled* are respectively the twilight and the dawn, each being said to be of the same length and containing the same number of years as the first or golden age—*i.e.* 1,728,000. It is in strict correspondence with our own solar day which has its twilight and dawn between day and night.

In going over the figures of the four ages, a peculiarity is noticed to which I refer at present as merely a curiosity. It is this:

The digits of Satya Yug 1, 7, 2, 8, added together make 18; those of Treta Yug 1, 2, 9, 6, make 18; those of Dwapara Yug 8, 6, 4, make 18; while those of Kali Yug 4, 3, 2, sum up only 9; but if those of the grand total of 4,320,00 be added together they make 9, and that with

Kali give 18 again. 18 is a number peculiar to Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, and the poem has 18 chapters in it. If the three 18's and one 9 found as above be added together, the result will be 63, and 3 x 6 equals 18, and if added make 9, and 18 added gives nine. If we multiply the three 18's and 9 produced from the different ages, we get 5, 8, 3, 2, which, if treated as before, give 18 again. And in the process of thus multiplying we discover a recurrence of the three eighteens and one 9, only inverted, as: The first 18 multiplied by the second one gives 3, 2, 4, which added results in 9; 324 multiplied by the third 18 gives 5, 8, 3, 2, which being added gives 18; and the product of the multiplication of 5,832 by 9, which is the result of adding the figures of Kali Yuga, is 5, 8, 4, 1, which on being added gives 18 again. Now, as the last of these apparently fanciful operations, let us add together the results gained by multiplying the figures which were obtained during the various steps we have gone through and then adding the results.

The first figures are 1 x 8 =	8
The second 3 x 2 x 4 =	24
The third 5 x 8 x 3 x 2 =	240
The fourth 5 x 8 x 4 x 1 =	160
These added together give	432,

which are the digits of Kali Yuga.

Now turning to *Isis Unveiled* at p. 32 of Vol. 1, we find this remarkable paragraph:

"Higgins justly believed that the cycle of the Indian system, of 432,00 is the true key of the secret cycle."

But in the following paragraph she declares it cannot be revealed. However, we may get some clues, for we see in the figures of Kali Yuga, 432,000 and in the great total (leaving out the Sandhis), 4,320,000. What this secret cycle is, I, however, am not competent to say. I only desire to throw out the hints.

Having thus glanced over the doctrine of the great cycle which includes all others, let us now devote a little consideration to the cycle referred to in the passages from the *Egyptian Wisdom* first quoted.

This cycle may be called for the present purpose *The Cycle of Descending Celestial Influences.* By "descending" I mean descending upon us.

Osiris here signifies most probably the good side of nature, and his brother Typhos the evil. Both must appear together. Typhos is some-

times called in the Egyptian books the opposer, and later with us, is known as the Devil. This appearance of Typhos at the same time with Osiris is paralleled in the history of the Indian Krishna who was a white Adept, for at the same time there also reigned a powerful Black magician named Kansa, who sought to destroy Krishna in the same way as Typhos conspired against the life of Osiris. And Rama also, in Hindu lore the great Adept or ruling god, was opposed by Ravana, the powerful Black magician king.

In instructing Osiris after the initiation, the gods foresaw two questions that might arise within him and which will also come before us. The first is the idea that if the gods are alive and do not mingle with men to the advantage of the latter and for the purpose of guiding them, then they must necessarily be without any employment. Such a charge has been made against the Beings who are said to live in the Himalayas, possessed of infinite knowledge and power. If, say the public, they know so much, why do not they come among us; and as they do not so come, then they must be without employment, perpetually brooding over nothing.

The instructor answered this in advance by showing how these Beings—called gods—governed mankind through efficient causes proceeding downward by various degrees; the gods being perpetually concerned in their proper sphere with those things relating to them, and which in their turn moved other causes that produced appropriate effects upon the earth, and themselves only coming directly into earthly relations when that became necessary at certain "orderly periods of time," upon the complete disappearance of harmony which would soon be followed by destruction if not restored. Then the gods themselves descend. This is after the revolution of many smaller cycles. The same is said in Bhagavad-Gita.

But frequently during the minor cycles it is necessary, as the *Egyptian Wisdom* says, "to impart a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind." This can be done by using less power than would be dissipated were a celestial Being to descend upon earth, and here the doctrine of the influence among us of Nirmanakayas* or Gnanis is supported in the Egyptian scheme in these words:

> For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes, who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns.

---

* For *Nirmanakayas* see *The Voice of the Silence* and its Glossary.

> This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature.

These "heroes" are none other than Nirmanakayas—Adepts of this or previous Manwantaras—who remain here in various states or conditions. Some are not using bodies at all, but keep spirituality alive among men in all parts of the world; and others are actually using bodies in the world. Who the latter are it would of course be impossible for me to know, and if I had the information, to give it out would be improper.

And among this "sacred tribe of heroes" must be classed other souls. They are those who, although now inhabiting bodies and moving among men, have passed through many occult initiations in previous lives, but are now condemned, as it were, to the penance of living in circumstances and in the bodies that hem them in, as well as for a time make them forget the glorious past. But their influence is always felt, even if they themselves are not aware of it. For their higher nature being in fact more developed than that of other men, it influences other natures at night or in hours of the day when all is favorable. The fact that these *obscured adepts* are not aware now of what they really are, only has to do with their memory of the past; it does not follow, because a man cannot remember his initiations, that he has had none. But there are some cases in which we can judge with a degree of certainty that such adepts were incarnated and what they were named. Take Thomas Vaughan, Raymond Lully, Sir Thomas More, Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus, and others like them, including also some of the Roman Catholic saints. These souls were as witnesses to the truth, leaving through the centuries, in their own nations, evidences for those who followed, and suggestions for keeping spirituality bright,—seed-thoughts, as it were, ready for the new mental soil. And as well as these historical characters, there are countless numbers of men and women now living who have passed through certain initiations during their past lives upon earth, and who produce effects in many directions quite unknown to themselves now. They are, in fact, old friends of "the sacred tribe of heroes," and can therefore be more easily used for the spreading of influences and the carrying out of effects necessary for the preservation of spirituality in this age of darkness. We find in our present experience a parallel to this forgetting of previous initiations. There is hardly one of us who has not passed through circumstances in early life, all

of which we have forgotten, but which ever since sensibly affect our thought and life. Hence the only point about which any question can be raised is that of reincarnation. If we believe in that doctrine, there is no great difficulty in admitting that many of us may have been initiated to some extent and forgotten it for the time. In connection with this we find in the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine,* at page 302, some suggestive words. The author says:

> Now that which the students of Occultism ought to know is that *the third eye is indissolubly connected with Karma.*
>
> * * In the case of the Atlanteans, it was precisely the spiritual being which sinned, the spirit element being still the "Master" principle in man in those days.
>
> *Thus it is that in those days the heaviest Karma* of the fifth race was generated *by our Monads.* * * *
>
> Hence the assertion that many of us are now working off the effects of the evil Karmic causes *produced by us in Atlantean bodies.*

In another place she puts the date of the last Atlantean destruction as far back as 11,000 years ago, and describes them as a people of immense knowledge and power. If we allow about 1,000 years for our period in Devachan, we will have only passed through some eleven incarnations since then; and supposing that many more have been our lot—as is my opinion, then we have to place ourselves among those wonderful though wicked people at the height of their power. Granting that we were guilty of the sinful practices of the days in which we then lived, and knowing the effect of Karma, it must follow that since then we have passed through many very disagreeable and painful lives, resembling by analogy dreadful situations in the years between youth and maturity. No wonder, then, if for the time we have forgotten outwardly what we then learned.

But all these historical personages to whom I have referred were living in a dark cycle that affected Europe only. These cycles do not cover the whole of the human race, fortunately for it, but run among the nation influenced for the allotted period, while other peoples remain untouched. Thus while Europe was in darkness, all India was full of men, kings and commoners alike, who possessed the true philosophy; for a different cycle was running there.

And such is the law as formulated by the best authorities. It is held that these cycles do not include the whole of mankind at any one time. In this paper I do not purpose to go into figures, for that requires a very

careful examination of the deeds and works of numerous historical personages in universal history, so as to arrive by analysis at correct periods.

It is thought by many that the present is a time when preparation is being made by the most advanced of the "sacred tribe of heroes" for a new cycle in which the assistance of a greater number of progressed souls from other spheres may be gained for mankind. Indeed, in *Isis Unveiled* this is plainly stated.

Writing in 1878, Madame Blavatsky says in vol. 1 of *Isis*:

> Unless we mistake the signs, the day is approaching when the world will receive the proofs that only ancient religions were in harmony with nature, and ancient science embraced all that can be known. Secrets long-kept may be revealed; books long-forgotten and arts long-time-lost may be brought to light again, papyri and parchments of inestimable importance will turn up in the hands of men who pretend to have unrolled them from mummies or stumbled upon them in buried crypts; tablets and pillars, whose sculptured revelations will stagger theologians and confound scientists, may yet be excavated and interpreted. Who knows the possibilities of the future? *An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin —nay, has already begun. The cycle has almost run its course; a new one is about to begin,* and the future pages of history may contain full proof that—
>
> If ancestry can be in aught believed,
> Descending spirits have conversed with man,
> And told him secrets of the world unknown.

Now the way to get at the coming on of the period or close of a larger cycle without wandering in the mazes of figures, is to regard the history and present state of mankind as known.

Thus in the darker age of Europe we find India almost unknown and America wholly so. That was a period when cycles were operating apart from each other, for men were separated from and ignorant of each other. In these continents there were great and powerful nations ruling in both North and South America, but they were not in communication with Europe or India.

Now, however, China knows of and communicates with England and America, and even dark Africa has constant visitors from all civilized nations, and to some extent is affected by us. Doubtless in the greater number of towns in Africa the white man and his doings are more or less like fables, but we with larger knowledge know that those fables rest upon the *fact* of our explorations there.

Judging, then, from the appearances in the affairs of men, we can conclude that now some great cycle is either ending or beginning, and that a number of minor circles are approaching each other.

At the same time with these social or material cycles, there are corresponding ones on a higher plane. One is quite easy to trace. It is the influence of Eastern metaphysics upon the Western mind. This higher cycle has been revolving for many years among the Orientals before we came within its power. Our falling under it is due to a physical cycle as a means. That one which is represented in the progress of trade, of science, of means for transportation. In this way the philosophical system of India and Tibet has begun to affect us, and no man can calculate its course.

Taking into account the spiritual cycles all so intimately connected with Karma and reincarnation, one would be compelled to conclude that this cycle will not be slow or weak. For, if we in Europe and America are the reincarnations of the ancients who formulated this philosophy, we must certainly be powerfully affected upon having it presented to our notice in this life. And as the very air is getting filled with theosophical ideas, and children are growing up every day, the conclusion is irresistible that as the new generation grows up it will be more familiar with theosophical terms and propositions than we were in our youths. For in every direction now, children are likely to hear Karma, Reincarnation, Buddhism, Theosophy, and all these ideas mentioned or discussed. In the course of twenty-five years, then, we shall find here in the United States a large and intelligent body of people believing once more in the very doctrines which they, perhaps ages ago, helped to define and promulgate.

Why not, then, call one of our present cycles the cycle of the Theosophical Society? It began in 1875, and, aided by other cycles then beginning to run, it has attained some force. Whether it will revolve for any greater length of time depends upon its earnest members. Members who enter it for the purpose of acquiring ideas merely for their own use will not assist. Mere numbers do not do the work, but sincere, earnest, active, unselfish members will keep this cycle always revolving. The wisdom of those who set it in motion becomes apparent when we begin to grasp somewhat the meaning of cyclic law. The Society could have remained a mere idea and might have been kept entirely away from outward expression in organization. Then, indeed, ideas similar to those prevalent in our Society might have been heard of.

But how? Garbled, and presented only here and there, so that perhaps not for half a century later would they be concretely presented. A wise man, however, knows how to prepare for a tide of spiritual influence. But how could an every-day Russian or American know that 1875 was just the proper year in which to begin so as to be ready for the oncoming rush now fairly set in? To my mind the mere fact that we were organized with a definite platform in that year is strong evidence that the "sacred tribe of heroes" had a hand in our formation. Let, us, then, not resist the cycle, nor, complaining of the task, sit down to rest. There is no time for rest. The weak, the despairing, and the doubting may have to wait, but men and women of action cannot stand still in the face of such an opportunity.

Arise, then, O Atlanteans, and repair the mischief done so long ago!

Roll on, O Wheel, roll on and conquer;
Roll on forevermore!

LESSONS OF INCARNATION

Let each one of us leave every other kind of knowledge and seek and follow one thing only, if peradventure he may be able to learn and may find some one who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil, and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity. He should know what the effect of beauty is when combined with poverty or wealth in a particular soul, and what are the good and evil consequences of noble and humble birth, of private and public station, of strength and weakness, of cleverness and dullness, and of all the natural and acquired gifts of the soul; he will then look at the nature of the soul, and from the consideration of all these qualities he will be able to determine which is the better and which is the worse; and so he will choose, giving the name of evil to the life which will make his soul more unjust, and good to the life which will make his soul more just; all else he will disregard. A man must take with him into the world below an adamantine faith in truth and right, that there too he may be undazzled by the desire of wealth or the other allurements of evil, lest, coming upon tyrannies and similiar villainies, he do irremediable wrongs to others and suffer yet worse himself; but let him know how to choose the mean and avoid the extremes on either side, as far as possible, not only in this life but in all that which is to come. For this is the way of happiness. —PLATO

NOTES ON THE DHAMMAPADA

THE Twelfth Canto of the *Dhammapada,* containing ten brief verses, affords another example of how the simplest utterances of the Buddha, when deeply pondered, yield a rich harvest. The title for this collection of precepts is "The Self," and therein Buddha emphasizes the necessity for recognizing egoic independence:

> If a man holds himself dear, let him diligently watch himself. The wise man should keep vigil.
>
> Let each man first establish himself in the way he should go and then let him teach others. Thus, the wise man will not suffer.
>
> Let each man shape himself, ere he teaches others. Subduing himself well he might indeed subdue others.

Buddha's teaching of *interdependence* is always implicit rather than explicit, coming into focus by way of the recommendation that each should respect the individual Karma of his fellow man, and *not* interfere without invitation. The psychology of punishment, as before remarked, is entirely alien to Buddhism, and the root of this alienation is to be found in Buddha's way of teaching *self*-respect. The whole of the *Dhammapada,* in fact, might be said to be an elaboration of the saying: "To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

Verse Nine is categorical, but, again, the *absolute* quality of statement derives simply from a formulation of general psychological law:

> Evil is done by self alone; by self alone is one defiled. By self alone is evil left undone; by self alone is one purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself. No man can purify another.

The May issue of *The Light of Buddha,* published monthly in Mandalay by the Burma Buddhist Society, shows how the logic of non-interference with the Karma of another has been carried unaltered through all the centuries. In an article entitled, "The Law of Karma," a retired District and Sessions Judge, U Ba Thaw, contrasts the Buddhist view of crime and punishment with the Christian view:

> Retribution and vengeance or anything that corresponds to the vengeance of God as "Vengeance is mine, said the Lord," can find no place in the Law of Karma which is the scientific Law of Cause and Effect. With these facts in view, we can reasonably assume that it cannot be the work of any Angel, Deva or God to punish or reward a person

for the act done as if this were his (god's) personal concern. Some western theologians tried to impress in the mind of the people that some persons by divine decree were foreordained to be saved from eternal suffering while others equally foreordained to suffer cruel torment through all eternity by the same god.

This, of course, implies neither the one class nor the other, irrespective of religion or reformation or whatever they might do or might not do, could evade the destiny allotted to them in advance before they were born or created by the same god.

Karma is like an ever-generating force. It acts like a spark of energy leaping to a new manifestation called "Rebirth." After death when name (Nama) and form (Rupa) dissolve, it is the force or energy and direction, the karmic agents of rebirth, that cause a fresh being, that is, passing of a current from one phase of becoming to another, undergoing at the same time the process of birth, old age, sickness, and death in each existence.

It was also in Burma, and in connection with the difference between Christianity and Buddhism in relation to crime and punishment, that H. Fielding Hall came to his deep respect for the Buddhist outlook. After explaining a particular case which came within his own jurisdiction—wherein a Burman servant who had committed theft and served a short term in jail had been, to his Buddhist surprise, refused re-employment—Hall wrote as follows:

Each had his own idea of what was law, and what was justice, and what was punishment. To the Burman all these words had one set of meanings; to the Englishman they had another, a very different one. And each of them took his ideas from his religion.

On a man's religion depends all his views of law and justice, his understanding of the word "punishment," his idea of how sin should be treated. And it was because of their different religions, because their religions differed so greatly on these points as to be almost opposed, that the English officer and his Burman servant failed to understand each other.

For to the Englishman punishment was a degradation. It seemed to him far more disgraceful that his servant should have been in gaol than that he should have committed theft. The theft he was ready to forgive, the punishment he could not. Punishment to him meant revenge. It is the revenge of an outraged and injured morality. The sinner had insulted the law, and therefore the law was to make him suffer. He was to be frightened into not doing it again. That is the idea. He was to be afraid of receiving punishment. And again his punishment was to be useful as a warning to others. Indeed, the magistrate had especially increased it with that object in view. He was to suffer that others might be saved.

> Now see the boy's idea.
>
> Punishment is an atonement, a purifying of the soul from the stain of sin. That is the only justification for, and meaning of, suffering.
>
> Consider this Burman. He had committed theft. That he admitted. He was prepared to atone for it. The magistrate was not content with that, but made him also atone for other men's sins. He was twice punished, because other men who escaped did ill. That was the first thing he could not understand. And then, when he had atoned both for his own sin and for that of others, when he came out of prison, he was looked upon as in a worse state than if he had never atoned at all.

The crux of the difference, all along, we may see, lies in the idea of vicarious atonement. The same psychology lends spurious logic, also, to the idea of vicarious punishment—a concept incomprehensible to the Buddhist. Again we note how modern Western psychology, through its influence upon courts and prisons, has recaptured in Western setting something of the Buddhist insight. For the psychologist, like the Buddhist, is never prepared to exclude any human being from improving his self-respect. If there must be punishment, it is to be corrective action, and regarded as simply that—with no attending motive for vengeance, nor even a show of disrespect for the person of the offender.

Particularly to the point here is an earlier passage from Canto Ten of the *Dhammapada.* Buddha remarks that "he who seeking his own happiness uses on others the rod of punishment because they seek their own happiness, will not find happiness." These few words express so well the view of present psychiatry in relation to criminal law that we can well understand why the gulf between the "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" doctrine and the principles of the psychotherapist are in basic conflict.

John McTaggart, English expounder of the logic of karma and reincarnation, spoke interestingly to this point in a letter written just at the turn of the century. McTaggart recognized, in consonance with the tradition, that there is no separation of "moral law" from the qualities of attitude and motivation:

> Accidental conformity with the moral law is, from the point of view of that law, as good as none. This want of real agreement leads you over to sin, which is the want of agreement become explicit. Here you deny the moral law for the sake of your individual will and clearly thereby for the first time the moral law becomes plainly visible. But the only end of will is to seek out good. And we are essentially rational and therefore moral. Our true good must therefore be essentially (inter alia) moral good. Hence to will what is against the

moral law is self-contradictory (this, if I am not mistaken, is the position of Socrates).

All crime must in the long run bring punishment, for in the long run, given immortality, we must find that our true good is incompatible with crime. Thus punishment asserts a supremacy of the law, as sin does of the individual will. Here we have a contradiction which is solved when the punishment attains its end and reconciles our will to the law. This process can be repeated indefinitely. For virtue might again become "immediate" as innocence once more, only innocence on a higher level. I suppose the reward of virtue gained in one life is always just the being able to start fresh as a superior kind of baby when one is born (cf. Rabbi Ben Ezra, "Fearless and Unperplexed"), and so you might go on from innocence through crime, punishment, repentance, virtue, to innocence again, until you had got as high as morality can carry you.

Turning to another dimension of Buddha's Canto on the "Self," we find a brief but clear correlation with the teaching of Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*—and both are directly related to the doctrine of non-interference with the Karma of others—the only legitimate emphasis being on *self*-conquest. Buddha said:

The Self is the Lord of self; what higher Lord could there be? When a man subdues well his self, he will find a Lord very difficult to find.

In Chapter Six of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna explains the same outlook to Arjuna:

One who hath ascended to meditation should raise the self by the Self; let him not suffer the Self to be lowered; for Self is the friend of self, and in like manner, self is its own enemy. Self is the friend of the man who is self-conquered; so self like a foe hath enmity to him who is not self-conquered. The Self of the man who is self-subdued and free from desire and anger is intent on the Supreme Self in heat and cold, in pain and pleasure, in honor and ignominy. He is esteemed among all who, whether amongst his friends and companions, in the midst of enemies or those who stand aloof or remain neutral, with those who love and those who hate, and in the company of sinners or the righteous, is of equal mind.

The final verse in Canto Twelve of the *Dhammapada* makes one other point explicit. Buddha advises, "Let no one neglect his own good work for the sake of another's however great. Once a man has discerned his own work let him devote himself to it." Here Buddha is calling attention to the necessity for each man's assuming an ethical and moral

independence. Only when he has found his own true calling is he fit to be a teacher, and those who "join movements," or "causes" for which they do *not* have a natural calling, will never be able to teach aright.

A Theravada Buddhist scripture shows continued purity of this teaching through the centuries. In the dialogue reprinted at the close of Book One in E. A. Burtt's *Teachings of The Compassionate Buddha,* a Brahmin is made to ask Gotama "if self-conquest, through meditation and isolation, is not a selfish act." The reply attributed to Gotama is as follows:

> Well, Brahmin, I will ask you a question in return. What do you think? A Tathagata arises here in the world, an Arahat, a perfect Buddha, endowed with knowledge and right conduct, well-farer, knower of the world(s), incomparable charioteer of men to be tamed, teacher of devas and mankind, a Buddha, a Lord. He speaks thus: 'Come, this is the Way, this is the course I have followed until, having realized by my own super-knowledge the matchless plunge into the Brahma-faring, I have made it known. Come you too, follow likewise, so that you also, having realized by your own super-knowledge the matchless plunge into the Brahma-faring, may abide in it.' It is thus that the Teacher himself teaches Dhamma, and others follow for the sake of the essence of truth and reality. And moreover these number many hundreds, many thousands, many hundreds of thousands. So, as this is the case, do you think that the course of merit that is due to going forth benefits one person or many?

Buddhist philosophy and psychology, we may see, then, is a beautifully wrought mosaic. Every central precept leads outward to correlation with the highest ethical doctrine—yet never institutes pressure in terms of what men "should" do. Buddha simply explains the nature of psychological law, and from this are men to become, in their turn, individuals of serenity and great teachers of humankind.

To Emerge Reborn

He must become a pupil again, a beginner; conquer the last and steepest stretch of the way, undergo new transformations. If he survives its perils, then is his destiny fulfilled: face to face he beholds the unbroken Truth, the Truth beyond all truths, the formless Origin of origins, the Void which is the All; is absorbed into it and from it emerges reborn.

—Eugen Herrigel

REINCARNATION

IT would be difficult to find a more interesting subject than reincarnation. For here is a natural attraction: reincarnation concerns ourselves, proposes certain possibilities as to our past and as to our future; and, if we reflect upon it, proposes radical possibilities as to our present—but this is more obscure. Certainly the thing that every man wants, if he is serious about an inquiry into the subject of immortality, is an idea that has leverage. An idea with leverage is an idea with power, and if we are serious, we are not interested in ideas that do not have power. Because we have ideas, we want to put them to work.

Most of us would like to believe that we are immortal, but we need to convince ourselves. We do not want anyone else to convince us, because this would be second-hand conviction; and this is no real good to us unless we are timid. Only the timid man wants to be *told* what is true. All the rest of us want to *know,* or know as much as we can from sources of conviction that we are at home with. An encouragement to us is that this idea of human rebirth has been the study of philosophers in every epoch, but still, because of the intellectual monopoly of what we are pleased to call "materialism," conviction may be difficult.

Our scientific achievements are not materialistic, but they are interpreted in terms of a materialistic philosophy; that is to say, they involve a conception where the "really real" is the physical. The great thinkers of ancient Greece were not materialists. They saw no reason to be materialists, because their kind of philosophizing and science did not emerge in a hostile atmosphere of bigoted religion. The prime characteristic of the ancient Greek was an attitude of wonderment. He felt no threat to the freedom of mind in a philosophy of immortality because there was no personal Jehovah to "administer" that immortality—to present it or to take it away. These are the theological conceptions which played a determining role in the formation of modern materialism. So we may look with envy at the ancient Greeks, who found nothing alien to their ideas of nature and process in the acceptance of the cycle of purification through rebirth—as celebrated by the Greek poet Empedocles, and found as explicit teaching in the mysteries of Orpheus. Reincarnation appears in the writings of Plato, and is repeated in the teachings of Plotinus. There were, in fact, nine hundred years of continuous teach-

ing of reincarnation by the Pythagoreans, the Platonists, and the Neoplatonists; and these so saturated early European civilization with this concept that it emerged in the earliest Christianity.

Reincarnation was also a basic conviction of millions upon millions of people—among the Hindus, and in another form among the Buddhists. It becomes an excursion in the geography of ideas to search out the idea of reincarnation throughout the world, whether among the aborigines of Australia, various tribes of American Indians, or the ancient Egyptians. A book on anthropology, in terms of antique religious beliefs, is a manual of the belief in reincarnation. Now this, of course, is not *proof* of reincarnation. But the great German philosopher Schopenhauer once remarked that an Easterner, if asked to characterize the European, would say that Europe is that place where people believe that men are born only once. The Easterner feels that all evidence points to rebirth.

Now there is the question of what goes along with this teaching, what its implications are, and what consequences it has for other departments of our life. Let us take first the question of growth. We know what growth is: development in the case of the individual. We are familiar with the biological side of growth, and know what happens to an individual during the growth from a germ plasm to a many-million-celled organism. That is the physical side. The *moral* development of the individual is less easy to pin down; there is greater variety among human beings in the moral nature than in the physical in that there are polar opposites of moral quality among human beings. A great light is thrown on the polarities of our moral character by reincarnation. Evolution is then the opportunity for *continuous* unfoldment of our powers and capacities.

If we are not really convinced of the dignity of man as both a free and a continuing intelligence, then we shall be suspicious of ourselves, doubtful—and consequently suspicious—of others. And the more fearful we are, the less tolerance we have. The less tolerance we have, the more sinister we become, and this extends itself in a vicious circle until there is no freedom left at all except in absolute conformity—the strangulation of life of the mind.

So reincarnation is a key-idea in a teaching which affords balance in philosophy; we see ourselves as builders of our own forms of life. Life becomes an equation we are working out, on and in ourselves.

THE SYMBOLISM OF NUMBERS

II

PYTHAGORAS esteemed the Deity (the Logos) to be the *centre of unity* and "Source of Harmony." We say this Deity was the *Logos,* not the MONAD that dwelleth in Solitude and Silence, because Pythagoras taught that UNITY being indivisible is *no number.* And this is also why it was required of the candidate, who applied for admittance into his school, that he should have already studied as a preliminary step, the Sciences of Arithmetic, Astronomy, Geometry and *Music,* held as the four divisions of Mathematics. Again, this explains why the Pythagoreans asserted that the doctrine of Numbers—the chief of all in Esotericism—had been revealed to man by the celestial deities; that the world has been called forth out of Chaos by Sound or Harmony, and constructed according to the principles of musical proportion; that the seven planets which rule the destiny of mortals have a harmonious motion "and intervals corresponding to musical diastemes, rendering various sounds, so perfectly consonant, that they produce the sweetest melody, which is inaudible to us, only by reason of the greatness of the sound, which our ears are incapable of receiving."

In the Pythagorean Theogony the hierarchies of the heavenly Host and Gods were numbered and expressed numerically. Pythagoras had studied Esoteric Science in India; therefore we find his pupils saying "The monad (the manifested one) is the principle of all things. From the Monad and the indeterminate duad (Chaos), numbers; from numbers, *Points;* from points, *Lines;* from lines, Superficies; from superficies, *Solids;* from these, solid Bodies, whose elements are four—Fire, Water, Air, Earth; of all which transmuted (correlated), and totally changed, the world consists."

The "great Extreme" of Confucius produces "two figures." These "two" produce in their turn "the four images"; these again "the eight symbols." It is complained that though the Confucianists see in them "Heaven, Earth and man in miniature," we can see in them anything we like. No doubt, and so it is with regard to many symbols, especially in those of the latest religions. But they who know something of of Occult numerals, see in these "figures" the symbol, however rude,

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NOTE.—Collated from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky.

of a harmonious progressive Evolution of Kosmos and its beings, both the Heavenly and the Terrestrial. And any one who has studied the numerical evolution in the primeval cosmogony of Pythagoras (a contemporary of Confucius) can never fail to find in his *Triad, Tetractis* and *Decad* emerging from the ONE and solitary Monad, the same idea. Confucius is laughed at by his Christian biographer for "talking of divination" before and after this passage, and is represented as saying: "The eight symbols determine good and ill fortune, and these lead to great deeds. There are no imitable images greater than heaven and earth. There are no changes greater than the four seasons (meaning North, South, East and West, *et seq.*). There are no suspended images brighter than the sun and moon. In preparing *things for use, there is none greater than the sage.* In determining good and ill-luck there is nothing greater than *the divining straws and the tortoise.*"

Therefore, the "divining straws" and the "tortoise," the "symbolic sets of lines," and the great sage who looks at them as they become one and two, and two become four, and four become eight, and the other sets "three and six," are laughed to scorn, only because his wise symbols are misunderstood.

Confucius, one of the greatest sages of the ancient world, believed in ancient magic, and practised it himself "if we take for granted the statements of *Kin-yu,*" and "he praised it to the skies in *Yi-kin,*" we are told by his reverend critic. Nevertheless, even in his age—*i.e.*, 600 B.C., Confucius and his school taught the sphericity of the Earth and even the heliocentric system; while, at about thrice 600 years after the Chinese philosopher, the Popes of Rome threatened and even burnt "heretics" for asserting the same. He is laughed at for speaking of the "Sacred Tortoise." No unprejudiced person can see any great difference between a *tortoise* and a *lamb* as candidates for sacredness, as both are symbols and no more. The Ox, the Eagle, the Lion, and occasionally the Dove, are "the sacred animals" of the Western Bible, the first three being found grouped round the Evangelists; and the fourth (the human face) is a Seraph, i.e., a fiery serpent, the Gnostic Agathodæmon probably. As explained, the "sacred animals" and the Flames or "Sparks" within the "Holy Four" refer to the prototypes of all that is found in the Universe in the *Divine Thought*, in the ROOT, which is the perfect cube, or the foundation of the Kosmos collectively and individually. They have all an occult reference to primordial Cosmic forms and its first concretions, work, and evolution.

Without throwing any discredit upon time-honoured beliefs, in whatever direction, we are forced to draw a marked line between blind faith, evolved by theologies, and knowledge due to the independent researches of long generations of adepts; between, in short, faith and philosophy. There have been—in all ages—undeniably learned and good men who, having been reared in sectarian beliefs, died in their crystallized convictions. For Protestants, the garden of Eden is the primeval point of departure in the drama of Humanity, and the solemn tragedy on the summit of Calvary, the prelude to the hoped-for Millennium. For Roman Catholics, Satan is at the foundation of Kosmos, Christ in its centre, and Antichrist at its apex. For both, the Hierarchy of Being begins and ends within the narrow frames of their respective theologies: one self-created *personal* God and an Empyrean ringing with the Hallelujas of *created* angels; the rest, *false* gods, and fiends.

Theophilosophy proceeds on broader lines. From the very beginning of Æons—in time and space in our Round and Globe—the Mysteries of nature (at any rate those which it is lawful for our races to know) were recorded by the pupils of those same now invisible "heavenly men," in geometrical figures and symbols. The keys thereto passed from one generation of "wise men" to the other. Some of the symbols, thus passed from the east to the west, were brought therefrom by Pythagoras, who was not the inventor of his famous "Triangle." The latter figure, along with the plane cube and circle, are more eloquent and scientific descriptions of the order of the evolution of the Universe, spiritual and psychic, as well as physical, than volumes of descriptive Cosmogonies and revealed *"Geneses."* The *ten points* inscribed within that "Pythagorean *triangle*" are worth all the theogonies and angelologies ever emanated from the theological brain. For he who interprets them—on their very face, and in the order given—will find in these seventeen points (the seven Mathematical Points hidden) the uninterrupted series of the genealogies from the first *Heavenly* to *terrestrial* man. And, as they give the order of Beings, so they reveal the order in which were evolved the Kosmos, our earth, and the primordial elements by which the latter was generated. Begotten in the invisible *Depths*, and in the womb of the same "Mother" as its fellow-globes—he who will master the mysteries of our Earth, will have mastered those of all others.

Whatever ignorance, pride or fanaticism may suggest to the contrary, Esoteric Cosmology can be shown inseparably connected with both

philosophy and modern science. The gods of the ancients the monads —from Pythagoras down to Leibnitz—and the atoms of the present materialistic schools (as borrowed by them from the theories of the old Greek Atomists) are only a compound unit, or a graduated unity like the human frame, which begins with body and ends with spirit. In the occult sciences they can be studied separately, but never mastered unless viewed in their mutual correlations during their life-cycle, and as a Universal Unity during *Pralayas*.

La Pluche shows sincerity, but gives a poor idea of his philosophical capacities when declaring his personal views on the Monad or the Mathematical Point. "A point," he says, "is enough to put all the schools in the world in a combustion. But what need has man to know that point, since the creation of such a small being is beyond his power? *A fortiori,* philosophy acts against probability when, from that point which absorbs and disconcerts all her meditations, she presumes to pass on to the generation of the world."

Philosophy, however, could never have formed its conception of a logical, universal, and absolute Deity if it had no Mathematical Point within the Circle to base its speculations upon. It is only the manifested Point, lost to our senses after its pregenetic appearance in the infinitude and *incognizability* of the Circle, that made a reconciliation between philosophy and theology possible—on condition that the latter should abandon its crude materialistic dogmas. And it is because it has so unwisely rejected the Pythagorean Monad and geometrical figures, that Christian theology has evolved its self-created human and personal God, the monstrous Head whence flow in two streams the dogmas of Salvation and Damnation. This is so true that even those clergymen who would be philosophers and who were Masons, have, in their arbitrary interpretations, fathered upon the ancient sages the queer idea that "the Monad represented (with them) *the throne* of the Omnipresent Deity, placed in the centre of the Empyrean to indicate T.G.A.O.T.U." —read "the Great Architect of the Universe." A curious explanation this, more Masonic than strictly Pythagorean.

Nor did the "hierogram within a Circle, or equilateral Triangle," ever mean "the exemplification of the unity of the divine Essence"; for this was exemplified by the plane of the boundless Circle. What it really meant was the triune co-equal Nature of the first differentiated Substance, or the *con-substantiality* of the (manifested) Spirit, matter and the Universe—their "Son," who proceeds from the Point (the

real, esoteric Logos) or the Pythagorean Monad. For the Greek *Monas* signifies "Unity" in its primary sense. Those unable to seize the difference between the monad—the Universal Unit—and the *Monads* of the manifested Unity, as also between the ever-hidden and the revealed LOGOS or the *Word,* ought never to meddle in philosophy, let alone the Esoteric Sciences. It is needless to remind the educated reader of Kant's *Thesis* to demonstrate his second *Antinomy.* Those who have read and understood it will see clearly the line we draw between the *absolutely Ideal* Universe and the invisible though manifested Kosmos. Our Gods and Monads are not the Elements of *extension* itself, but only those of the invisible reality which is the basis of the manifested Kosmos. Neither esoteric philosophy, nor Kant nor Liebnitz would ever admit that extension can be composed of simple or unextended parts. But theologian-philosophers will not grasp this. The Circle and the Point, which latter retires into and merges with the former, after having emanated the first three points and connected them with lines, thus forming the first *noumenal* basis of the Second Triangle in the Manifested World, have ever been an insuperable obstacle to theological flights into dogmatic Empyreans. On the authority of this Archaic Symbol, a male, personal god, the *Creator* and *Father* of all, becomes a third-rate emanation, the Sephiroth standing *fourth* in descent, and on the left hand of En-Soph. Hence, the Monad is degraded into a Vehicle—a "throne"!

The Monad—only the emanation and reflection of the Point (Logos) in the phenomenal World—becomes, as the *apex* of the manifested equilateral triangle, the "Father." The left side or line is the *Duad,* the "Mother," regarded as the evil, counteracting principle; the right side represents the Son ("his Mother's husband" in every Cosmogony, as one with the *apex*); at the basic line is the Universal plane of productive Nature, unifying on the phenomenal plane Father-Mother-Son, as these were unified in the *apex,* in the supersensuous World. By mystic transmutation they became the Quaternary—the triangle became the Tetraktis.

This transcendental application of geometry to Cosmic and divine theogony—the Alpha and the Omega of mystical conception—became dwarfed after Pythagoras by Aristotle. By omitting the Point and the Circle, and taking no account of the apex, he reduced the metaphysical value of the idea, and thus limited the doctrine of magnitude to a simple TRIAD—the *line,* the *surface,* and the *body.* His modern heirs,

who play at Idealism, have interpreted these three figures as Space, Force, and Matter—"the potencies of an interacting Unity."

But to the average physicist, as remarked by a Kabalist, "Space, Force, Matter, are, what signs in algebra are to the mathematician, merely conventional symbols"; or "Force as force, and Matter as matter, are absolutely unknowable as is the assumed empty space in which they are held to interact." As symbols representing abstractions, "the physicist bases reasoned hypotheses of the origin of things . . . and sees three needs in what he terms creation: (*a*) a place wherein to create; (*b*) a medium by which to create; (*c*) a material from which to create. And in giving a logical expression to this hypothesis through the terms space, force, matter, he believes he has proved the existence of that which each of these represents *as he conceives it to be.*"

The physicist who regards Space merely as a representation of our mind, or extension unrelated to things in it, which Locke defined as capable of neither resistance nor motion; the paradoxical materialist, who would have a *void* there, where he can see no matter, would reject with the utmost contempt the proposition that "Space is a substantial though (apparently) an absolutely unknowable living Entity." Such is, nevertheless, the Kabalistic teaching, and it is that of Archaic philosophy. Space is the real world, while our world is an artificial one. It is the One Unity throughout its infinitude: in its bottomless depths as on its illusive surface; a surface studded with countless phenomenal Universes, systems and mirage-like worlds. Nevertheless, to the Eastern Occultist, who is an objective Idealist at the bottom, in the *real* world, which is a Unity of Forces, there is "a connection of all matter in the *plenum*," as Leibnitz would say. This is symbolized in the Pythagorean Triangle.

It consists of *ten points* inscribed pyramid-like (from one to the last four) within its three lines, and it symbolizes the Universe in the famous Pythagorean Decad. The upper single dot is a Monad, and represents a Unit-Point, which is *the* Unity from whence all proceeds, and all is of the same essence with it. While the ten dots within the triangle represent the phenomenal world, the three sides of the equilateral triangle which enclose the pyramid of dots are the barriers of *noumenal* Matter, or Substance, that separate it from the world of Thought. "Pythagoras considered a *point* to correspond in proportion to unity; a *line* to 2; a *superficies* to 3; a *solid* to 4; and he defined a point as a Monad having position, and the beginning of all things; a line was

thought to correspond with duality, because it was produced by the first motion from indivisible nature, and formed the junction of two points. A superficies was compared to the number three because it is the first of all causes that are found in figures; for a circle, which is the principle of all round figures, comprises a triad, in centre—space—circumference. But a triangle, which is the first of all rectilineal figures, is included in a ternary, and receives its form according to that number; and was considered by the Pythagoreans to be the creator of all sublunary things. The four points at the base of the Pythagorean triangle correspond with a solid or cube, which combines the principles of length, breadth, and thickness, for no solid can have less than four extreme boundary points."

It is argued that "the human mind cannot conceive an indivisible unit short of the annihilation of the idea with its subject." This is an error, as the Pythagoreans have proved, and a number of Seers before them, although there is a special training for it, and although the profane mind can hardly grasp it. But there are such things as *metamathematics* and *metageometry*. Even mathematics pure and simple proceed from the Universal to the particular, from the mathematical, hence indivisible Point, to solid figures. The teaching originated in India, and was taught in Europe by Pythagoras, who, throwing a veil over the Circle and the Point—which no living man can define except as incomprehensible abstractions—laid the origin of the differentiated Cosmic matter in the basic horizontal line of the Triangle. Thus the latter became the earliest of geometrical figures. The author of "New Aspects of Life" and of the Kabalistic Mysteries—objects to the objectivization, so to speak, of the Pythagorean conception and use of the equilateral triangle, and calls it a *misnomer*. His argument that a solid equilateral body—"one whose base, and each of its sides, form equal triangles—must have four co-equal sides or surfaces, while a triangular plane will as necessarily possess five," demonstrates on the contrary the grandeur of the conception in all its esoteric application to the idea of the *pre-genesis* of Kosmos. Granted, that an ideal triangle, depicted by mathematical, imaginary lines "can have no sides at all, being simply *a phantom of the mind* (if sides be imputed to which, they must be the sides of the object it constructively represents)." But in such case most of the scientific hypotheses are no better than "phantoms of the mind"; they are unverifiable, except on inference, and have been adopted merely to answer scientific necessities. Furthermore, the ideal triangle—"as

the abstract idea of a triangular body, and, therefore, as the type of an abstract idea"—accomplished and carried out to perfection the double symbolism intended. As an emblem applicable to the objective idea, the simple triangle became a solid. When repeated in stone on the four cardinal points, it assumed the shape of the Pyramid—the symbol of the phenomenal merging into the noumenal Universe of thought—at the apex of the four triangles; and, as an "imaginary figure constructed of three mathematical lines," it symbolized the subjective spheres—those lines "enclosing a mathematical space—which is equal to nothing enclosing nothing." Because, to the senses and the untrained consciousness of profane and scientist, everything beyond the line of differentiated matter—i.e., outside of, and beyond the realm of even the most spiritual *substance*—has to remain for ever *equal to nothing.* It is the AIN-SOPH—the *No*-THING.

Yet these "phantoms of the mind" are in truth no greater abstractions than the abstract ideas in general upon evolution and physical development—e.g., Gravity, Matter, Force, etc.—on which the exact sciences are based. Our most eminent chemists and physicists are earnestly pursuing the not hopeless attempt of finally tracing to its hiding place the *protyle,* or the basic line of the Pythagorean triangle. The latter is, as said, the grandest conception imaginable, as it symbolizes both the ideal and the visible universes. For if *"the possible unit is only a possibility as an actuality of nature, as an individual of any kind,"* and as every individual natural object is capable of division, and by division loses its unity, *or ceases to be a unit,* it is so only in the realm of exact sciences in a world as deceptive as it is illusive. In the realm of the Esoteric sciences the unit divided ad infinitum, instead of losing its unity, approaches with every division the planes of the only eternal REALITY. The eye of the SEER can follow and behold it in all its pregenetic glory. This same idea of the reality of the subjective, and the unreality of the objective universe, is found at the bottom of the Pythagorean and Platonic teachings—limited to the *Elect* alone; for Porphyry, speaking of the *Monad* and the *Duad,* says that the former only was considered substantial and real, *"that most simple Being, the cause of all unity and the measure of all things."*

(To be continued)

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—AND ANSWER

WHY is it that most people find so irresistible the urge to think, talk, and gossip about the lives of others—their questionable conduct, etc.? Part of us seems to thrive on such indulgence, and we can occupy hours with variations of it. Could it be that such people's own lives are so colorless and uncreative that they can only get color and creativity vicariously?

(*a*) We all have a certain amount of curiosity. Curiosity can take different directions—personal or impersonal. If we think and act with our lower nature, our curiosity is directed toward more selfish ends. But if we think and act with our higher capacities, we apply our curiosity and imagination for more creative purposes. Then we call these the desire and urge to acquire knowledge.

Gossip is not creative, and its motive is not one of trying to acquire self-knowledge. It is true that a wise and mature person *never* gossips. He might think a lot about other people, but with another attitude. So that if he does talk about other people's lives, it is not to criticize or judge them. When people gossip about others, they see only from their personal point of view. Gossip, in the general meaning of the word, is not very flattering to the person who is being discussed or analyzed. The discussed person is being used to satisfy whatever hostile feelings the gossiping ones would like to express. Some "fairness" may exist in the statements, but mostly this is mere lip-serving, and this kind of fairness is not justice. Very seldom would A, talking to B, tell B exactly what was said about B when B was not present. In such a case a relationship is not honest; to tell a person the truth means to be both impersonal and just.

The questioner asks if gossip plays so big a part in some people's lives because such people's own lives are colorless and uncreative. It is more than that. It is the attitude of these people toward their own lives. No one's life is really colorless and uncreative. The individual who thinks his life to be so is a good example of an alienated person. He does so many things in his everyday life mechanically that he does not live as a full human being. Not finding meaning in *his* life, he looks for satisfaction outside of himself, and finds excitement in questioning the life and conduct of others. But if we would understand the

full meaning and significance of even the smallest events of our own lives, no moment would seem colorless. The energy which goes into gossip can be used in a constructive way.

It needs a lot of understanding and self-discipline not to try to "figure out" the lives of others—especially when we are very close to someone and as a natural consequence are concerned with his or her actions. Although it seems easy to analyze other people "objectively," we always know too little. To be objective with ourselves and with our own lives doesn't even seem easy, but this *is* eventually possible.

(*b*) One might say that it is impossible for people not to concern themselves with the happenings of others, but it depends upon the degree and character of involvement through *thinking* which determines whether or not we are being constructively concerned or just living vicariously. In the *Bhagavad-Gita* we are referred to the "three qualities" to which man is, unfortunately, subject. The quality of *tamas* —indifference or laziness—suggests part of the answer to this question. If one is uncreative, just can't "get up and get things rolling" on his own, then he is open for seeking what excitement he can find in others' lives. There is still a part of his nature that would like to be more courageous, or even just more adventurous, than it is presently, but he has not sufficient self-reliance.

However, we must live partly with and through other people, so it is how we do this that really matters. If one is not vicious about the thoughts he holds concerning another's activities when discussing them with someone who is also genuinely interested, then perhaps a great deal can be learned. It may be only when one becomes *preoccupied* with thinking about others' lives that concern is unhealthy. Preoccupation means that we are either indulging the *tamasic* nature, or we are participating in the destructive activity of jealousy. And the tendency to spend time with such thoughts is contagious, and should be recognized as soon as possible; we are all subject to its fascination. Perhaps losing ourselves in the "plots" of the lives of others is like the experience of seeing a good movie, for in both instances we have interest, excitement, color, and adventure presented before us, and all we have to do is *look*. In this case, preoccupation feeds our psychic nature in a way that is not constructive, and when we have personal conflicts with the people, we are especially inclined to judge them adversely.

A constructively happy person would not be concerned in the same way with another's life or activities. He would be interested all right,

but not preoccupied or passing judgment. His *is* a constructive attitude, rather than that of someone struggling to adopt one.

Very often a friendship between two people arises out of mutual dependence, but this very condition leaves both less than free and self-reliant. Then this interdependence seems to be the basis of the friendship. Is it possible to state a basis for friendship which recognizes dependence, but envisions a goal beyond this state?

(*a*) Answering this question would be all but impossible save for the various principles postulated in the philosophy or religion of Theosophy. For the question encompasses the psyche as well as the soul.

There are many attractions which lie outside the realm of "true friendship," or what would be called a worth-while relationship for both parties. But all those outside of very deep and necessary bonds should, for the student of Theosophy, be thought of carefully in terms of what is right and beneficial for both persons concerned, and for any others who might be affected. These "partial" or semi-casual relationships, though varied in quality and initial impulse, may yet be considered in relation to the same criterion—what is best for the persons concerned, and what the karmic tie really is. Thinking thus philosophically, the friends can still be independent. But when one comes to the sort of friendship described in the question, a definite bond must be recognized at the same time. If one who has felt himself independent most of his life—able to remain "objective" about his feelings—finds himself dependent on another person, this can bring about all sorts of feelings and hidden tendencies, before only latent. If the bond is strong enough to make the person or persons feel that there is really more to their attraction than the immediate person, then one may really see himself as being in a most "educative" situation.

The actual basis for a friendship which recognizes dependence between two persons, yet also envisions a goal beyond this state, is hard to describe. But maybe it could be said that there is an element of compulsions beyond rational reason and beyond the explainable, yet not in contradiction with the rational and good. There is a sense of belonging and "feeling at home" with such a person. There is the feeling or realization that the other person will add to whatever you do or wish to participate in. There is a real and true admiration for the other person's attitude, whether it is what you would take, or not.

There are many entanglements in life that can make us *think* we are involved with the right sort of situation and the right sort of an environment. But it takes a great deal of intuition to make a situation such as that described in the question "come out on top."

(*b*) Interdependence, it seems, is the basis for true friendship, yet what kind of interdependence is ideal? Interdependence of the highest sort could not be personal. When one is inclined to think of another as a close personal friend, there is always some virtue or quality either in the personality, physical appearance, or in the mental attitude toward various phases of life, or in all three, which has appeal. This does not fully cover the process of developing personal friendship, though.

Personal friendship is also an emotional experience. We idealize or idolize a person, often to the extent of thinking that he is incapable of doing anything wrong or of possessing any devious qualities. We often try to imitate or simulate that which we find appealing in the other. This is all done, of course, according to particular tastes and temperament.

Naturally, there is that of the heart in a close relationship as well as the outward attachment. Certainly the recognition of the completeness of another is to be appreciated, lauded, for in Theosophy there is the emphasis on the complete unfoldment of man in all departments of his nature. The difficulty here is to find a depth of feeling in friendship that will transcend the purely personal attachments, for these are bound to bring conflicts.

Our task is to seek out the source of that feeling which we call love, and see in it something of that conviction of the inherent perfection of another human being, without which the personal attraction could have no lasting value. In effect, we are searching for something in a human being which is changeless, even by so-called "death." Where is this to be found? In the mind? In the heart? Why should we feel any kind of love, personal or impersonal towards another, in the first place? The ultimate basis for any true friendship is identity in spiritual potential, an identity the description of which transcends the power of the mind. The mind is a creative force, yet there can be no identity on the plane of mind, it being the source of self-conscious *individuality*. Thus we can see that true interdependence would be true independence of the highest order, since there would be no beclouding personal attachment.

THE LANGUAGE OF DREAMS

THE point of view that all dreams are important as self-revelation, was characteristic of the ancient world. The theosophical perspective on dreams is the view of the ancients, and the ancients were natural people. For them, everything had meaning, nothing was entirely inconsequential. But to comprehend this outlook in more detail let us recapitulate a few theosophic essentials: first, the whole point of using such a word as "Theosophy," and the core of the theosophic tradition, is the affirmation that man *is a soul in evolution.* Therefore, every human being is growing in understanding as he encounters myriads of experiences—psychological, physical, mental, ethical and moral—and *each one* of these experiences is important. As the soul is in the body, however, he lives in two worlds at the same time, has two aspects of his own mental nature. He very seldom sees divine human quality. The soul seldom sees with complete clarity because the man is also, in his personal being, a "construct," a combination of himself with the environment in which he finds himself. The personality of man, we may say, comes partly from the environment and partly from the higher mind. The higher mind, looking through the personality, sees with clouded vision.

The sages have inspired us with the thought that it is possible to get beyond this alternation between bifocal lenses, to do away with the need of lenses at all, and see with the eye of soul. The sages understand dreams and visions, both higher and lower, because they have perspective on them. The sages have dreamed many dreams, for they have sensitivity, they have suffered, they are men extremely aware of their own mental perturbations; probably they are men who have had many troubled dreams. In the story of Buddha's enlightenment we discover the climax of the perturbations, the confusions which were part of the Buddha's personal nature: in the long vigil after fasting and ascetic practice, the last remnants of distorted personal vision came to the fore, revealing to him those things which he still needed to know about himself.

This is why the subject of dreaming is of vital importance to every man, for every man is a Buddha on the way to enlightenment. And the ancients may have been better able to understand this because they lived simpler lives. We, by contrast, are bombarded incessantly by

noise; we are careerists in the superficial; we spend so much of our time keeping up appearances, physical and otherwise, while the pace is so fast that the consequence is exhaustion. All this makes it more difficult to search out the meaning of our dreams. We have also had a very discouraging heritage to contend with—the tradition of Christianity, which in its theological sense, has always made the task of psychological understanding difficult with its suggestion that man cannot come to know himself—that he has to have help. The light has to come from "on high," and though it is possible that man can be instructed by God, it is impossible for him to instruct himself from a dream. This view, clearly, does not make the study of dreams a part of *our* work. On the other hand, what has been usually called the materialistic approach, has sought to eliminate dreams as having any significance aside from indicating emotional disturbance. There has been great interest in the content and symbolism of dreams in psychotherapy, and psychoanalysis particularly, but until recently the ancients' view that dreams may be *really saying something to us,* that we may be speaking to ourselves significantly through dreams, is one to which we are not accustomed.

One of the most trustworthy exponents of this view is the psychoanalyst, Erich Fromm. In his book, *The Forgotten Language,* Fromm holds that it is impossible to construct a single theory of interpreting dreams. The soul must interpret itself to itself, and its relationship to its environment—which includes the personality. Dreams are "letters to be opened," since they must be made comprehensible to us by our own efforts. True, certain basic symbolisms, in the Freudian sense, do occur, and demonstrate a measure of validity to Freudian interpretation. But the basic consideration in respect to knowing ourselves through dreams is our willingness to accept the fact that we are, as has often been said, like the iceberg: our psychological nature contains complexities, buried memories, impulses—and also moments of clear vision and inspiration that we don't bother to study, not having faith that all this is worth-while to know more about.

It is a fairly common experience with some, and probably sometimes experienced by everyone, to have a dream suggesting that for *once* the higher mind within us is able to see everything clearly; we are able to make a beautiful synthesis of all the discordant things in our lives; we are able to see how everything should be; we are confident, able to understand all of our problems, yet we can bring through nothing of

this in terms of specific thought. All this should reveal to us a power of the higher mind which, though we have not prepared the way for it to manifest, is nonetheless present. We cannot translate it in terms of our waking language, because we have not built the bridge between, but this, alone, should indicate to us that dreams are important. We awaken sometimes, not with the feeling that much mental activity has been going on, but we have seen some kind of a vision—a vision that has lifted us out of a depression, made an impossible life seem understandable, with meaning and significance in everything that transpires.

William Q. Judge speaks of the Book of Job and relates how Job said that in dreams and in visions of the night, "man is instructed." But this does not mean the instruction from a great teacher able to infuse a part of his knowledge, temporarily, into a pupil; it means the instruction we can give ourselves, if we will learn how to do it. Such communication from ourselves to ourselves is about things that *part* of us does not understand. We refuse to open such a "letter" because we are afraid of what we may find. Here is where the soul-perspective of reincarnation and karma, as brought into focus in the theosophic tradition, becomes so important. The Theosophist views experiences, not as good or bad, but all experiences in terms of "soul" and of "learning." Therefore, if a man is confused, the purpose should be to discover the *cause* of the confusion, to find out why he discovers it to be so difficult to discipline himself, to awaken his own higher energies—why he is so incessantly involved in a purely personal point of view when at times he hungers for a higher vision. We say things to ourselves in dreams, revealing both our weaknesses and our strengths. In *The Forgotten Language,* Dr. Fromm suggests that it is beginning to dawn on some students of dreams that we are at times not only worse, less controlled and more selfish in dreams, but we are also at other times better controlled and see more clearly, when we are able to perceive with great delicacy and sensitivity.

There have been innumerable suggestions as to how the power of dreaming may be cultivated, of how one may make something of the energy that pours into this channel of dreaming. The theosophical aim is ultimately to transcend dreams, to attain knowledge. Dreams are not knowledge, but reflections of a certain kind of perception—perhaps a very low-level perception, but even if it is a high perception, it is not *direct rational experience.* To cultivate the powers of dreaming, in this sense, various ascetic practices and self-disciplines are often

adhered to in order to purify the mind and body and obtain moderation in all things that have to do with physical existence. All such endeavor, which brings a special kind of tranquility, is necessary. This need suggests other sorts of disciplines, also, for the man who hates, or the man who fears, or the man who covets, is not tranquil. When he, not tranquil, retires at night, whatever comes to him will be in distorted fashion. There is, then, a real need for quiet reading and contemplation before retiring. Dreams are part of the experience of man which, like all other experience, can be brought into harmony with understanding and with a sense of purpose.

Our dreams throw us into the greatest perturbation when affected by fear or anxiety. When we hate in a dream—when we express hostility or animosity—we are close enough to a higher state to feel extremely guilty. We can justify hostility with active rationalization when all our intellectual energies are in our possession, but when they are in abeyance we find it more difficult to justify hate, or the visualizing of someone else's injury or destruction. So this causes us trouble that we should think about, because by thinking about it, we come to realize things within us that we did not know were there. Animosity can turn in the direction of psychosis, and we can be destroyed by something called "paranoia." The beginnings of unbalance are revealed to us in the content of those dreams about which we quite rightly feel guilty.

Wish-fulfilment dreams make us feel guilt, too. But this, too, may be constructive, showing us that our day-dreams are fancies wherein we envision ourselves as having the things we want to have in the way we want to have them, which constitutes an outpouring of creative energy in a non-creative direction—a kind of self-satisfaction. The ancients held—as we find especially in the Indian scriptures—that the state of man after death is a very poor state indeed if he is bound up for æons of time in a sea of churning psychic energies. That is, he dreams and dreams and *dreams,* because he has done this so much during earth-life that, instead of being ready to come back and engage in further trials of soul strength, instead of being eager to learn more, he is content to dream in the state of *devachan.* While the visions may be beautiful, they do not lead to enlightenment, but to personal bliss.

Many spectacular dreams are reminders of the powers of the soul. R. L. Megroz' *The Dream World* (published in 1939) recounts Lincoln's precognitive dream of his own assassination. This is well-authenticated, and we know the dream to be something that actually happened. Lin-

coln described in detail his feelings on walking through the White House and hearing that someone had been killed. On asking who, he was told that it was the President. This was a shock to Lincoln's wife when he related it to her, but it was not a terrifying thought to Lincoln himself. There are thousands of such dreams recorded. What really, is their value?

In viewing clairvoyant or precognitive dreams we then begin to understand one of the meanings of karma, for karma suggests that there are many things waiting to happen to us—things which are so inevitably constructed out of the way we have lived and thought that their coming about is simply a matter of time. We may *alter* the time, and we may be able to influence *how* events affect us, but much is in our atmosphere and due to come. Lincoln was able to experience and yet not be shaken by the dream of his assassination. He was perhaps also able to pass to the time of assassination, prepared. In such case, there is at least one kind of purpose served: since it is impossible to ward off the death, it is at least possible to be prepared, to be philosophically able to encounter that moment with calm. The average man would do well not to have clairvoyant dreams in regard to his own destiny, because he would live in mortal terror. Yet, often, those who have these dreams are strong enough to react bravely and constructively. Lincoln was such a man; he had in a special sense earlier cultivated "the power of dreaming," because he was a man of contemplation. He was also a man who was willing to suffer, and who *did* suffer because he was seeking to know himself, because he was never simply afraid, but was always willing to encounter whatever life had in store for him.

Thus, dreaming indicates in dramatic fashion the powers of the soul, the powers of the liberated mind. We need to have faith in our ability to transcend, our ability, ultimately, to see beyond the confines of what we see now. In clairvoyance we see physical events; but if we can see beyond physical events, we may realize that the same capacity turned in another direction can help us see beyond shallow ideals. To cultivate "the power of dreaming" means to see beyond our prejudices, and will enable us to become the men that somewhere, deep in our hearts, we think we ought to be.

ON THE LOOKOUT

Pocketbook Tragedy

Lookout for September attempted evaluation of several current reincarnation novels, finding occasion to be strongly critical of aspects of these books. A recent Bantam book, however, *Reincarnation, the Whole Startling Story,* by DeWitt Miller, is far more annoying from a theosophical point of view. Mr. Miller, who calls himself "an authority in the field of psychical research," is clearly opposed to the implications of reincarnation. Presented to the public under the guise of impartiality, it is advertised thus:

> HERE ARE THE FACTS—YOU DECIDE
>
> Here is a clear and exciting analysis of the latest thinking about reincarnation—an eye-opening book on a subject that has commanded intense public interest since the appearance of the astounding account of *The Search for Bridey Murphy.*
>
> In a sober and straightforward manner DeWitt Miller discusses reincarnation from every angle. He objectively analyzes all the ancient and modern beliefs on this extremely fascinating subject.
>
> DeWitt Miller has long been a distinguished authority in the field of psychical research, and has devoted a lifetime to the study of psychic phenomena.
>
> *Reincarnation . . . the Whole Startling Story* is an exciting, thought-provoking view of one of the most stimulating questions of our time.

Strong Negative Bias

Commenting on C. J. Ducasse's balanced treatment of the possibility of reincarnation, Mr. Miller reveals a strong bias. He writes: "If conclusive proof should ever be forthcoming of Professor Ducasse's hypothesis, I would not only consider the cosmos irrational; I would consider it the product of a sadistic deity who was insane. If I were forced to choose between reincarnation with an interval between 'occupied by the individual distilling out of the memories of the life just ended such wisdom as his reflective powers enable him to extract' and the medieval conception of hell as an eternal bed of hot coals, I would certainly choose the latter. At least it would be warm there. Fortunately, there appears to be no logical necessity for such a choice."

Moreover, by soliciting contribution from a medical doctor who doubles in psychical research—Russell G. MacRobert—Miller shows his penchant for Spiritualism, or at least Swedenborgianism. Dr. MacRobert explains this view:

> When we die we do not find ourselves disembodied, but possessed of a substantial body suitable for our life in the spiritual realm. This is not a vaporous spectral body, but a body really substantial and perfectly organized.
>
> In Eastern philosophies, it is contended that the end of human existence is mergence in the Divine. This obviously involves the loss of distinctive personality. According to Swedenborg, as members of the family of God we are distinct individuals, each contributing the value of his personality to the common good. The heavenly society is harmony in variety, its unifying power being the love of good and the desire to serve.
>
> From the above it will be gathered that rebirth does not imply reincarnation. Only once are we born on earth, and after our earth life we continue as spiritual beings, with bodies of spiritual substance, in the spiritual world. There is no need for us to return to the earth to gain further experience and endure further discipline—all that is essential for our eternal welfare is provided in the eternal abode of humanity.

H.P.B. Changes Mind

A contribution of Mr. Miller's for which Theosophists will hardly feel indebted is a reproduction of sections from Wickland's *Twenty Years Among the Dead,* which deal with supposed communication with H. P. Blavatsky in an after-life. According to the "spirit" contacted by Wickland, H. P. Blavatsky now "knows better" and has given up belief in reincarnation. (Mr. Miller, apparently, would like any reincarnationists among his readers to do the same.) The Wickland passage runs as follows, a "spirit" speaking as follows:

> *Sp*: Forget reincarnation, because it is a sandbag around your neck. You will have that so centered in your mind that you will think and think about only that, and then you will stay just where you are. You cannot progress because your mind will always revert to the earth again, and that Gate which was opened for the English lady could never be opened to anyone who believed in reincarnation.
>
> The thought of it is so self-hypnotizing and so self-satisfying that there is nothing in your mind except coming back, and those are real selfish thoughts. You wrap yourself in those thoughts and you remain just where you are.

You cannot reincarnate. I have seen the effect of such thoughts, and have also talked with people who believed in reincarnation.

Question: What does Madam Blavatsky think about reincarnation now?

Sp.: We had some dispute about it when I was on earth, and we have had more since I came here. She does not believe in it now. She has had her lesson. It took a very long time, but now all she would like to come back for would be to correct her mistakes.

Mr. Miller comments:

I have quoted at length from Dr. Wickland's book because I believe that it is one of the most vital and pragmatic aspects of the reincarnation problem. Many psychical researchers, including for instance Dr. MacRobert (see Chapter 15), believe that Dr. Wickland's work—and that of Dr. Bull—is of tremendous importance.

If that is so, a belief in reincarnation could be a very dangerous thing. A little knowledge could easily end in a tragic state of affairs.

Obviously, as I have stated elsewhere, both *possession* and *reincarnation* may exist. There is no logical conflict between the two.

A Fair Account

A welcome relief to Miller's misleading hodgepodge is a volume by L. Stanley Jast, M.A., former chief librarian of Manchester, England. Entitled *Reincarnation and Karma, A Spiritual Philosophy Applied to the World of Today* (Castle Books, New York, 1956). Mr. Jast's thoughtful essays give clear enunciation to reincarnation philosophy. At the outset, the author makes it apparent that he means to employ the judicial perspectives gained from public service and his scholarly background, but at the same time to make affirmations on the ground that they are justifiable according to his own conception of "pure reason."

Two Kinds of Evidence

Mr. Jast writes in his opening chapter:

The evidence for reincarnation is of different kinds and of varying value, and appeals, of course, with differing strength to different types of mind. To some the wide-spread belief in it, both in the past and present, especially in the East, and its existence as a fundamental dogma in many world religions, carries paramount weight. It has been taught or accepted by some of the greatest sages and thinkers. To others, again, the more direct evidence of persons who affirm that they definitely remember their past lives, or episodes in them, is equally or even more convincing. But what is by far the strongest

evidence for the fact of reincarnation lies in none of these things. A belief, however widespread, however hoary with antiquity, however strongly held, may be a mistaken belief, even if one is justified in assuming that *all* widely-held beliefs must have a basis of truth: the basis may be there, but it may differ tremendously from the superstructure erected upon it. If sages and thinkers have taught or accepted the doctrine, other sages and thinkers have denied it or ignored it. Evidence of this nature may be good as far as it goes, or it may be bad.

The basic testimony to the truth of reincarnation is of a purely intellectual order. It rests on the ability of the conception to give significance and meaning to what would otherwise be without either, and this is the only kind of evidence of *any* truth, whether in the world of phenomena or the world of thought, which has ultimate value. It can be deduced with rigorous logic from the most elementary assumption of a moral order in the universe, and without *that* assumption there is not even a universe: there is merely a monstrous futility or a colossal nightmare.

An Appealing Treatise on Karma

One passage in Mr. Jast's book parallels descriptions of karmic action reproduced last year in Lookout from C. J. Ducasse's *A Philosophical Scrutiny of Religion.* The following is simple and clear:

> A man is drawn to an action of which he disapproves, which he knows perfectly well is unworthy of him, which a part of him wants to do and which another part of him condemns. Now, let us suppose that, as a result of past actions of a similar kind and the habit which these have formed, while theoretically he is not bound to do the thing, yet the forces impelling him to do it—forces which he himself has vitalized and strengthened—are so powerful that to all intents and purposes it is certain that the action will be done. Even then, in the moment he is doing it, if he struggles against it, yielding with the lower part of him, but opposing with the higher, he has altered the action. It has been done on one plane: it has not been done on another. The Karma will be altered accordingly. He will receive the Karma of the outer action, which will be "bad," and the Karma of the inner action, which will be "good," and the latter being on a higher plane will be the more important. So that in the worst of circumstances there is opportunity of choice, and wherever there is choice there is so far freedom of the will.

No Man a Helpless Victim

> No man is the helpless victim of his vices or weaknesses, whatever these may be and however deeply the channels along which they flow have been dug. Always assuming reincarnation. The range of the free will within the scope of a single life, especially in view of the

distance and splendor of the goal to be eventually achieved, is comparatively small: in the best of cases, that of the highly intelligent, characterful man, who meets with a controlled judgment and a matured philosophy the chances and changes of existence; and in the worst of cases, that of the man in the "fell clutch" of a vicious habit, submerging will and self-respect, as in the example just given. Time is an essential. Reincarnation gives time, and with time nothing is impossible: there is no goal that can not be reached. Man is not the creature of his environment and of his family and racial heredity. These naturally play their largest role in the early years—shall we not rather say, the early lives?—of his apprenticeship. His responses to circumstance and environment are tentative and semi-automatic. Never wholly automatic, for it is clear that there is always a choice, and if the alternatives before him should be no more than two, the alternative between "this" and "that," a series of such choices could in the measure of time that reincarnation affords enable him so to control the curve of his progress that any desired point could be approached and, with time, attained.

Concluding Dialogue

Mr. Jast's method in *Reincarnation and Karma* is one of informal essay, and approach chosen without apology on the ground that strict logic and scholarship concern themselves with only *one* sort of evidence, which is unsatisfactory for the task at hand. In his last chapter, however, Mr. Jast presents some essentials of the theosophical perspective:

Reader: And now what is your authority for all this:

Author: Primarily there is only one authority for any doctrine, philosophical, religious, political, scientific, or other.

Reader: And that is?

Author: Your own.

Reader: Meaning that I can accept as true only what appeals to me as true, what fits in with my own measures of value, those measures again depending on my intellectual and spiritual make-up, my temperamental outlook, and so on?

Author: Precisely.

Reader: But much of that, in fact by far the most of it, comes to me by way of authority, authority outside my own, the mass of testimony yielded by the thoughts, observations, and experiences of my fellow-men.

Author: Of course.

Reader: But authorities conflict, nor do all authorities carry the same weight.

Author: True. But it is your own authority which must sift them, and nobody accepts an authority whose statements conflict with his own inner convictions.

Reader: But suppose I have no inner convictions?

Author: Everyone has some.

Reader: But not on all subjects. Assume that I have what is called an "open mind" on the general theme you have discussed in this book.

Author: Naturally I have assumed that; otherwise the book would be useless to you.

Reader: Exactly. Well, then, what are the authorities behind your statements, the outside authorities?

Author: I have taken certain basic conceptions which are common to all the world religions and the most ancient philosophies, changing in form and details but fundamentally the same.

MEDICINAL PACIFIERS

In line with Lookout's recent notice on rauwolfia, cautionary in effect, *Newsweek* for May 21 comments on the enormous sale of certain "peace pills" which appear to be "easing the tensions and worries of thousands of frenetic Americans." *Newsweek* reports:

> In the past two years, the tranquilizers have revolutionized the treatment of mental and emotional patients, from advanced schizophrenia to a mild anxiety neurosis. They have brought the drug industry an unexpected bonus of at least $100 million a year. . . .
>
> News of the "wonder drugs" that offer peace of mind without the necessity of going to a psychiatrist or even reading a book has so raised the hopes of the emotionally ill that over-the-counter sales of these prescription drugs have become inevitable.

ILL-ADVISED ENTHUSIASM

> Where prescriptions of the pills are easy to come by, enthusiastic users pass them around to their friends, who are likely to gobble them like peanuts. This, psychiatrists say, presents the most serious medical problem. Nervous people may compulsively swallow anything they can lay their hands on, and in enormous doses, on the theory that "if a little is good, a lot is better." In the case of a highly sensitive person, a dangerous reaction may follow too much unsupervised swallowing of the famous "happiness pills." Many psychiatrists . . . are worried over the heavy demand for the pills which developed even before the doctors came out of the huddle.

CYCLES OF POPULARITY

Newsweek traces the rise and fall in popularity of "strange drugs [which] have been used to treat mental illness." Beginning with black

hellebore, of the buttercup plant family, which was used as early as 400 B.C. by Hippocrates, *Newsweek* progresses through the combination of opium and asafetida which was the "favorite prescription for mental illness of Dr. Benjamin Rush in the 1700's" on through the barbiturates, which began their ascending cycle about 1870, to the final triumph of the "miracle" drugs of the 1950's. Then come the now-expected warnings:

> But along with the professional enthusiasm came reports of the drugs' unfavorable side effects, temporary, at least, on the liver and brain tissues. Furthermore, they did not work well on all mental patients. They even reversed themselves in some cases, causing manic excitement or dangerous depression instead of a deep, natural calm. . . . Before using the drugs in mental disease, the general practitioner should consult with a psychiatrist on diagnosis and the recovery outlook.

Tranquilizing Drugs Attacked

Medical opinion varies from favorable to adverse; but, according to *Newsweek* for May 14, one "ruthless attack" was made on the use of tranquilizing drugs—in addition to attack on frontal lobotomies and shock and insulin therapy—by Dr. Percival Bailey, director of the Illinois State Psychopathic Institute. The May 21 *Newsweek* summary also provides a number of cautionary expressions, such as the following from Dr. Winfred Overholser, chief of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D.C.:

> The tranquilizing drugs are not like mother's milk—good for everyone. They should be dispensed only by prescription, and the patient should be watched by a doctor. There are several serious complications which many physicians are not aware of. Thorazine, for instance, can cause jaundice. It occurs only rarely, but it should be guarded against.

Secondary Effects

> Thorazine also can cause the loss of ability to generate white cells, the fighters in infection—which means that the patient may succumb to slight infections. This happens in very few cases, possibly one tenth of one per cent. Still it is another reason why self-medication (with tranquilizers) is dangerous.
>
> Serparil can cause stuffiness of the nose and edema (swelling) of the glottis (voice box). This could cause fatal strangulation. Also, since these drugs put a blanket on emotions, they can push a person into a depression. There have been occasional suicides.

SUMMATION

Though Dr. Overholser also credits the tranquilizers with "ushering in a new era in mental health," the foregoing qualifications are not inconsiderable.

How do the tranquilizers act on the central nervous system? "The mystery has never been explained satisfactorily," said Dr. Howard D. Fabing, chief of neuropsychiatry at Christ Hospital, Cincinnati. "In our search for specificity of action of the neurotropic drugs, we encounter the uncomfortable fact that we are dealing with the human brain—an organ which by its very nature is lacking in specificity."

"At best," concludes *Newsweek,* "the tranquilizers are hardly the universal panacea, acceptable to all people." And Dr. William Sargant of St. Thomas Hospital, London, wryly observes in the British Medical *Journal*: "Even several tranquilizer swallows will hardly make a psychiatric summer. What is new is not always true, and what is true is not always new."

RECENT FINDS SUPPORT HUMANOID THEORY

A dispatch from Rome to the New York *Times* (June 20) reports:

> American and European scientists have found what they think is an important clue to the reconstruction of a humanoid, or ancestor of man, who lived 10,000,000 years ago.
>
> A number of fossilized bones of this creature, assumed to have been unrelated to any kind of prehistoric ape, were brought to light last week from a browncoal mine near Grosseto, less than 120 miles northwest of Rome.
>
> The search was started in central Italy last April on a new theory that there might be no connection between man and ape and that Tuscany was the place to look for evidence.

STILL NO COMPLETE PICTURE

The *Times* recapitulates the "humanoid" theory of man's ancestry advanced by Dr. Johannes Hurzeler, of Basle, and Dr. Helmut de Terra, of Columbia University (see Lookout for July), and continues:

> An Italian professor who also took part in the Grosseto meeting indicated that the finds represented proof that what Dr. Hurzeler and Dr. de Terra call the humanoid actually lived in the Grosseto area millions of years ago.
>
> This Italian source added that, while the new finds might not yet prove or disprove that the humanoid looked exactly as Dr. Hurzeler and Dr. De Terra pictured it, "everyone felt much encouraged to continue digging."

> Although the announcement gave no details, it was understood that the finds consisted of a "sizable" number of fossilized bone fragments enclosed in coal. They were discovered about 180 feet below the surface.

Only Darwin's Theory of "Human" Evolution Challenged

Both sponsors of the new theory tried to make it clear at the conference in New York last March that they were not challenging Darwin's general theory of evolution, but only this concept of human descent. As Dr. De Terra said at that time, "there seems to be a very strong likelihood that man's ancestors developed very far back in time and independently of the 'anthropoid' apes." Scientists still question, according to the *Times,* whether the fossils previously studied by Dr. Hurzeler represent a direct ancestor of modern man—or whether they are merely humanlike.

A New Mathematical Problem

"The world was made 'through three Seraphim—Sepher, Sephar, and Sipur,' or 'through Number, Numbers, and Numbered'," says H.P.B. (*S.D.* I, 92). A new twist was given to this idea recently by Dr. George Gamow of the Convair research department, according to the San Diego *Independent.* Dr. Gamow declared that "because the elements contained in all living cells are identical, the phenomena of all living creatures and plants can be reduced to a problem in mathematics." The *Independent* paraphrases Dr. Gamow:

> Man is a mathematical phenomenon and humans or any other living thing can be created in a test tube without the inconvenience of biological birth as we know it. It appears to be just a matter of getting the right mathematical sequence until the laboratory will be able to produce a synthetic man.
>
> Hereditary qualities can be highly selective too. Human beings need not be created nondescriptly but according to specific qualifications—tall or short, blonde or brunette, brown eyes or blue.
>
> Science has already passed its first milestone in the creation of a synthetic human being, and it now stands on the threshold of potential realization of this new vista in the evolution of man.

Synthetic Human Beings?

The *Independent* quotes Dr. Gamow:

> Test tube man is not only a technical possibility but a not-too-far-off probability. Not long ago, people scoffed at the idea of a flight

to the moon, yet today we know that it is technically possible. Creation of a synthetic human is equally scientifically possible. I not only believe in this, but I hope to see both feats accomplished during my lifetime.

Just as in human language where the meaning of a word or sentence may be altered by changing the sequence of a few letters, so the switch in a few amino acids in a protein molecule may considerably alter its biological function. What right have we to assume randomness in the hereditary material, the product of a natural selection process which has operated for millions of years?

IMAGINATION VERSUS KNOWLEDGE

According to the *Independent,* Dr. Gamow points out that "the sequence of digits in *pi* (3.1415865) is also random; there is no discernible system or pattern in the sequence." Dr. Gamow continues:

> It might be imagined that a mad mathematician who, searching for "useful numbers," writes down one random sequence after another until, after rejecting millions of them finds by test that it is very helpful indeed to use *pi,* 3.1415865, in the geometrical problem of squaring a circle."

True, such a picture *might* be imagined; but it is evident that H.P.B. did not consider *pi* a "random sequence," for she says (*S.D.* I, 90-91):

> "The Three, the One, the Four, the One, the Five" (in their totality —twice seven) represent 31415—the numerical hierarchy of the Dhyan-Chohans of various orders, and of the inner or circumscribed world. When placed on the boundary of the great circle of "Pass not" . . . the "rope" that hedges off the phenomenal from the noumenal Kosmos, this number, when not enlarged by permutation and expansion, is ever the circle and the mystic Svastica. . . . Mathematically they represent the well-known calculation, namely, that the ratio of the diameter to the circumference of a circle is as 1 to 3.1415, or the value of the *pi*. . . . This set of figures must have the same meaning, since the 1:314,159, and then again 1:3:1,415,927 are worked out in the secret calculations to express various cycles and ages of the "first born. . . ."

Thus, although *The Secret Doctrine* provides substantiation of Dr. Gamow's statement that "the phenomena of all living creatures and plants can be reduced to a problem in mathematics," it also evidences the abstruseness of the "problem" and the recondite nature of the computations involved. Furthermore, since the "creation" of a being is, so to say, from above downward, the creation of a *human* being as envisioned by scientists such as Dr. Gamow is quite impossible.

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The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable basis for union among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that basis. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signatures will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with. Write to:

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